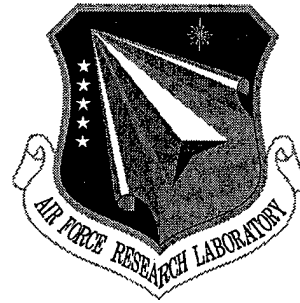


**AFRL-SN-RS-TR-2001-152**

**Final Technical Report**

**July 2001**



## **SUB-APERTURE ANTENNA MODELING ON FIXED WING AIRCRAFT**

**Analytic Designs, Inc.**

**Sponsored by  
Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency  
DARPA Order No. J491/00**

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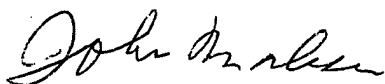
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**20011217 179**

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## SUB-APERTURE ANTENNA MODELING ON FIXED WING AIRCRAFT

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Contractor: Analytic Designs, Inc.  
Contract Number: F30602-00-C-0185  
Effective Date of Contract: 22 June 2000  
Contract Expiration Date: 22 May 2001  
Short Title of Work: Sub-Aperture Antenna Modeling on Fixed  
Aircraft  
Period of Work Covered: Jun 00 – May 01

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Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.

This research was supported by the Defense Advanced Research  
Projects Agency of the Department of Defense and was monitored  
by John Maher, AFRL/SNRD, 26 Electronic Pky, Rome, NY.

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503.				
1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)		2. REPORT DATE Jul 01		3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Final Jun 00 - May 01
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE  SUB-APERTURE ANTENNA MODELING ON FIXED WING AIRCRAFT			5. FUNDING NUMBERS C - F30602-00-C-0185 PE - 63762E PR - J491 TA - SN WU - P2	
6. AUTHOR(S)  Allen K. Kominek and Harry T. Shamansky				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)  Analytic Designs, Inc. 245 East Gray Street Columbus OH 43215-3210			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)  Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency      AFRL/SNRD 3701 North Fairfax Drive                              26 Electronic Pky Arlington VA 22203-1714                              Rome NY 13441-4514			10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER  AFRL-SN-RS-TR-2001-152	
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES  AFRL Project Engineer: John Maher, SNRD      315-330-4696				
12a. DISTRIBUTION AVAILABILITY STATEMENT  Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.			12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE	
13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words) The far field, volumetric radiation patterns for three antenna array configurations installed on a DeHavilland Dash 7 aircraft was determined. The arrays consisted of twenty-six sub-elements that were individually excited to allow arbitrary weighting for post pattern generation. The first two array configurations consisted of dipole elements offset from a ground plane. The third array configuration consisted of a slot element simulating a TEM horn antenna. All pattern data was formatted to be compatible with Air Force Research Laboratory's radar system analysis software.				
14. SUBJECT TERMS  Antenna patterns, radar simulation			15. NUMBER OF PAGES 22	
			16. PRICE CODE	
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT  UNCLASSIFIED	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE  UNCLASSIFIED	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT  UNCLASSIFIED	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT  UL	

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# 1 Introduction

The radiation performance of installed antenna arrays was desired for a De Havilland Dash-7 aircraft. Figure 1 and 2 illustrates the aircraft and the regions outlined in red where the elements of the array structure were located.

The illustration in Figure 1 shows a region in red in red where the array structure is located. This region represents a  $0.7 \times 10$  meter conducting plate with its normal oriented in the y-z plane,  $5^\circ$  from the y-axis (towards the z-axis). The array consists of 26 subelements spaced one-half wavelength apart and a quarter wavelength from the plate. Each subarray consists of two center fed dipoles spaced one-half wavelength apart. Figure 3 illustrates the geometry of two array configurations used in these calculations. One configuration maintained the dipoles parallel to the x-y plane and is designated as the horizontal configuration. The second configuration maintained the dipoles parallel to the y-z plane and is designated as the vertical configuration.

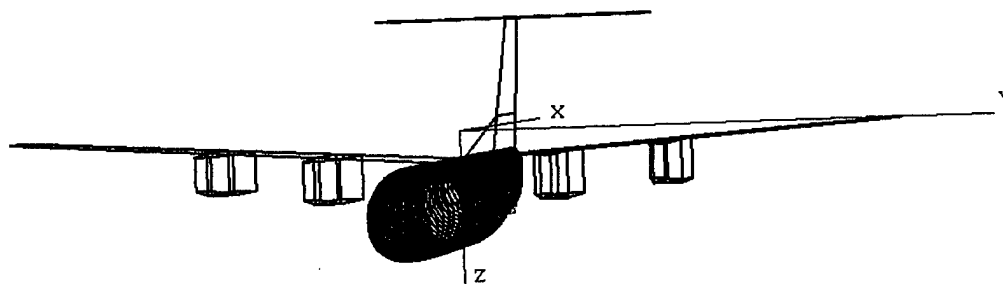


Figure 1: Illustration of Dash-7 aircraft with a  $0.7 \times 10$  meter backplane for the antenna array.

The illustration in Figure 2 shows 52 regions in red where each region represents a  $15''$  by  $15''$  surface where a radiating element is positioned. The spacing between the center of each element region is  $15.375''$ . There are 52 regions total forming a  $26 \times 2$  matrix array. Each two element column forms one subarray to yield a total of 26 subarray elements in this array. The array is positioned  $12'$  from the nose of the aircraft to the closest subarray element edge. The center of the subarrays in the y-z plane is located  $15^\circ$  down from the x-y plane.

The electromagnetic analysis technique used to calculate the pattern of the subarrays installed on the aircraft was Physical Optics (PO). The pattern generation entailed the calculation of the far-field pattern for each of the 26 subarrays individually excited for later recombination with the appropriate weights. The illumination of the aircraft from the subarrays must be known for the PO solution and discussed in the following section.

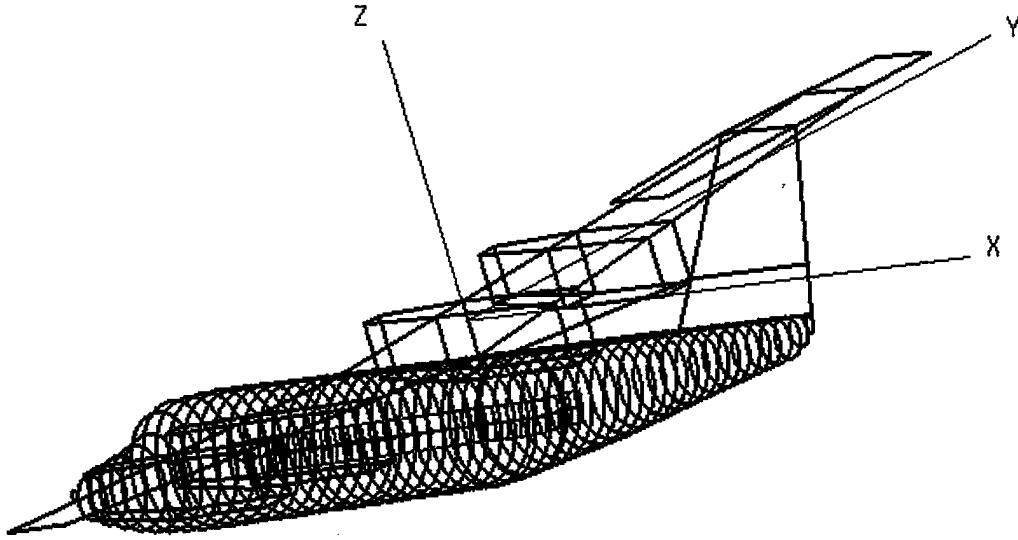


Figure 2: Illustration of Dash-7 aircraft with an antenna array.

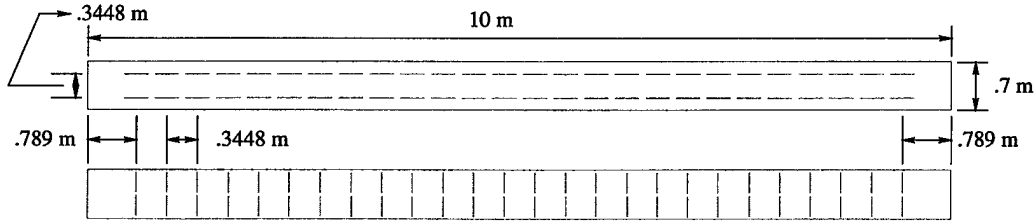


Figure 3: Illustration of the dipole spacing over backplane. Configurations: top - horizontal, bottom - vertical. Backplane shown in purple and subarray elements in red.

## 2 Subarray Element Synthesis

The near field patterns of the dipole and slot antennas were calculate through different means.

A variety of approaches to provide the illumination for the 26 dipole subarrays was studied in [1], and a moment method approach was chosen. The required near-field illumination was provided by a near-field calculation, consisting of integrating the surface currents for each excited and unexcited dipole pairs forming the array and the rectangular backplane. Each dipole pair (subarray element) was separated 0.3448 meters in the horizontal direction which corresponded to a half-wavelength at the operational frequency of 435 MHz and 0.1724 meters (quarter-wavelength) from the backplane. The dipoles were 0.3276 meters long (95% of a half-wavelength). Figure 3 illustrates the spacing of the dipoles over the backplane. The subarray element numbering begins with the one closest to the nose of the aircraft and proceeds



to the rear of the aircraft.

The TEM horn antenna for the third array configuration was simulated by a slot antenna. The true radiating element in this array is a TEM horn antenna with a footprint of 15" by 15" and extending 12" from the surface. Figure 4 illustrates the principle plane patterns for this antenna when configured in a 12 element array at 325 MHz. These patterns were duplicated in the deep lit region by 12 slot elements, each centered in the 15" by 15" footprint of the TEM horn antenna. The dimensions of slot elements were 0.1 by 0.3 meters. The 0.3 meter long edge of the slot was aligned with the y-z plane.

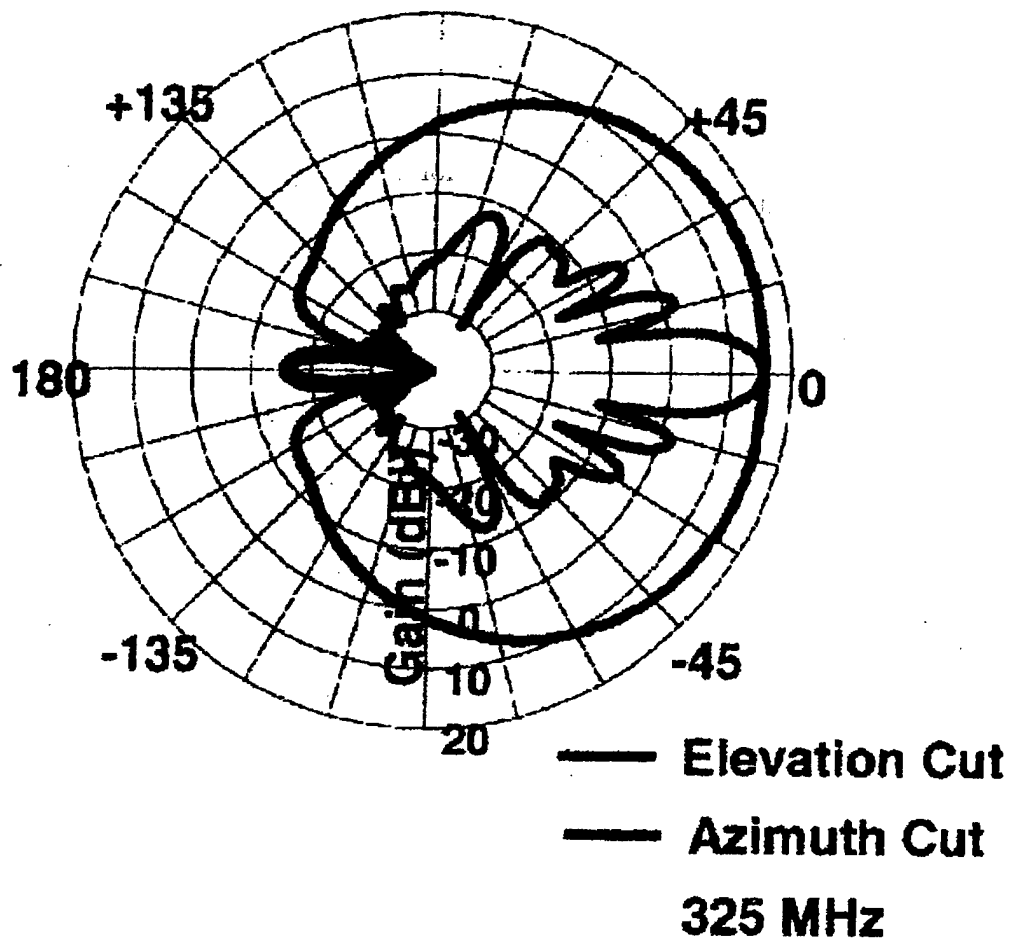


Figure 4: Illustration of the co-polarized far-field behavior for subarray element one.

### 3 Installed Pattern Calculation

The volumetric pattern was calculated for each individually excited subarray element using physical optics (PO) at 435 MHz. The PO approximation entailed the entire aircraft meshed into triangular facets with nodal spacings less than 0.1 wavelength. The PO current ( $2\hat{n} \times \mathbf{H}^i$ ) was deposited on each facet and then integrated into the far-field for each radiation angle.

The output format generated consisted of a complex, copolarized gain value for each theta and phi observation angle. Theta and phi were varied every 2 degrees between  $0 \leq \theta \leq 180$  and  $-180 \leq \phi \leq 180$ . For the horizontally polarized array configuration, the copolarized field was  $\hat{x}$  directed and for the vertically polarized array configuration, the copolarized field was  $0.0871\hat{y} + 0.9961\hat{z}$  directed. Figure 5 illustrates the far-fields for horizontally polarized dipole array element one (the one closest to the nose of the aircraft). Figure 6 illustrates the far-fields for horizontally polarized simulate TEM horn array element one (the one closest to the nose of the aircraft).

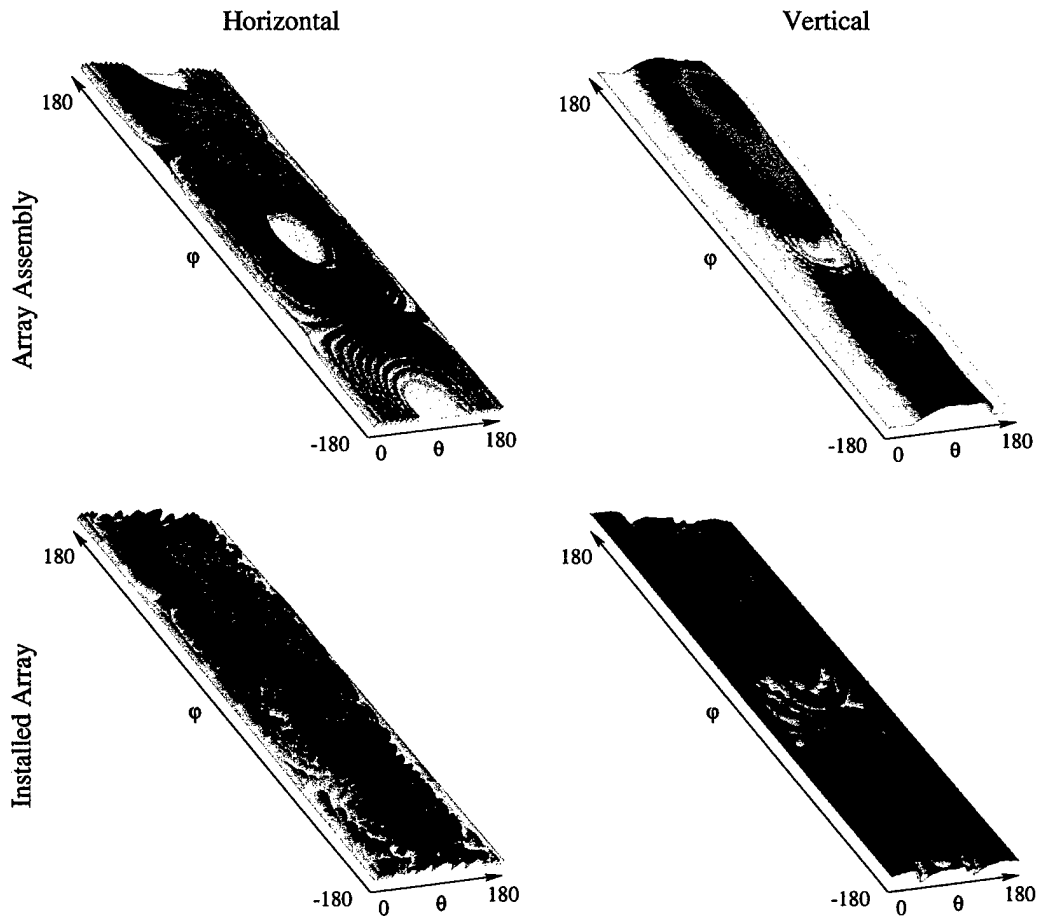


Figure 5: Illustration of the co-polarized far-field behavior for the dipole subarray element one.

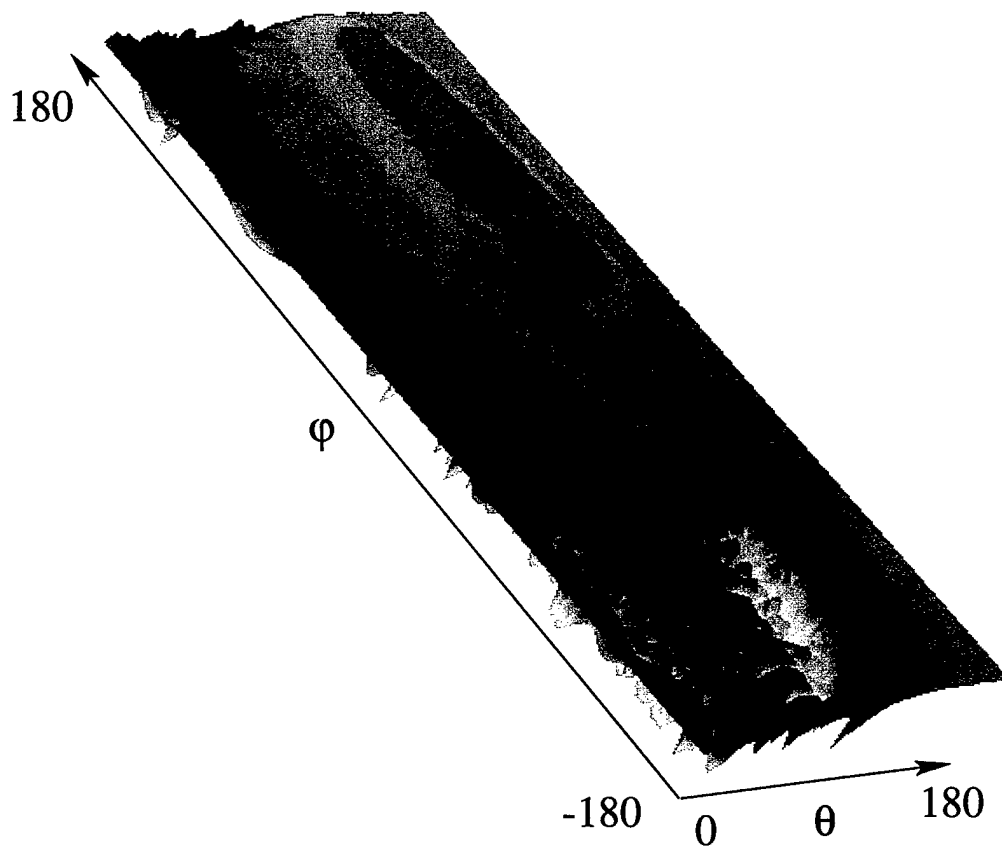


Figure 6: Illustration of the co-polarized far-field behavior for subarray element one for the TEM horn simulated element.

## 4 Summary

The volumetric patterns for 26 subarray elements individually excited for the described antenna configurations on a De Havilland Dash-7 were calculated. These patterns are well suited for the AFRL space-time adaptive processing code, RLSTAP.

## References

- [1] 'Element Synthesis for a Subarray', Analytic Designs, Incorporated, Report No. 0011-09-ROME-1, September 11, 2000.